

One young specimen, agreeing well with birds of the same age, obtained by Andersson in Damaraland.

95. *ARDETTA FLAVIROSTRIS* (Wagl.) ; Hartl., Journ. f. Orn. 1855, p. 361 ; *Id.*, Orn. Westafr. p. 220.

One specimen.

96. *PARRA AFRICANA*, Gmel. ; Hartl., Journ. f. Orn. 1855, p. 361 ; *Id.*, Orn. Westafr. p. 240.

One specimen. This species is apparently plentiful all over Guinea.

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XXXV.—*Birds observed during two Voyages across the North Atlantic.* By GEORGE CAVENDISH TAYLOR, F.Z.S.

LAST year I made two voyages between Liverpool and New York. The weather experienced was, with the exception of several days passed in dense fog, most favourable for the observation of oceanic birds, and in this respect was a great contrast to former voyages. I regret not being able to record the latitude and longitude to illustrate my remarks ; but in neither voyage was the position of the ship ascertained at noon, posted up, or published.

I left Liverpool in the 'Scotia,' on the 16th of May. The following evening about sunset we passed Cape Clear. On the 18th there were but few birds to be seen, and none came near the ship. When we left the land we left the Gulls. On the 19th, the wind was strong and cold and the sea rough. Shearwaters were seen, and Stormy Petrels, but the latter were not near the ship. The two following days the wind was strong, with a rough sea, and I made no observations.

On the 22nd the weather was the same, but much colder, the effect probably of the arctic current ; for we were now nearing the coast of Newfoundland. The birds most abundant were Fulmars, and in a less degree Greater Shearwaters, *Puffinus major*, easily distinguishable by their size and the quantity of white on the head and back. The 23rd was fine and bright, and the sea had gone down. We crossed the banks of Newfoundland, passing the longitude of Cape Race about

10 A.M., seeing, during the day, numbers of Porpoises, and occasionally Whales. In the morning there were large flocks of Shearwaters, *P. major*. As the ship approached they would rise, not in a mass, but in succession, fly half a mile or so forward, and pitch until we again came near them. Towards evening there were not so many; but throughout the day I could see flocks or companies of them, from twenty to one hundred, sitting here and there on the sea, which, being calm, was more favourable for observing than on any previous day. Probably for the same reason I saw more Stormy Petrels, but they did not come near the ship; also three Phalaropes sitting on the water. The latter rose as the ship came near them, and flew straight away. No doubt there were many more; but one cannot readily sight so small a bird at any distance, and not at all if the sea is rough. Long-tailed Skuas, probably *Stercorarius buffoni*, were also of frequent occurrence, but they did not fly near the ship. The next day we ran into a dense fog, which continued almost up to the time of our reaching New York, where we arrived early on the morning of the 26th, and consequently my ornithological observations for this voyage were brought to a close.

On the 15th July, I left New York in the 'China,' homeward bound, in some of the hottest weather I ever experienced. Even after dark, when we were out at sea, where there was a good breeze, the thermometer in the saloon on deck stood at 85°; but this is nothing to what it was while the ship was in the harbour of New York.

On the 17th, about 6 A.M., being off the coast of Nova Scotia, the engines were stopped for repairs; I awoke and went on deck. The atmosphere was clear, and the sea quite calm. The ship was surrounded by numbers of Stormy Petrels—probably *Thalassidroma wilsoni* in the greatest abundance, with a light brown bar across the wings and back. They flew or settled on the water within a few feet of the ship, stopping to pick up anything floating, or that was thrown to them. When the ship resumed her course they left us.

On the 18th, we were enveloped in dense fog. Occasionally the ship passed through an oasis of clear atmosphere extending for a few miles, and then again into another thick bank of fog.

Indeed the fog-trumpet was sounding most of the time after we left New York. Of course, under these circumstances, when it is with difficulty that one can see the length of the ship, ornithological observations become very limited. The air had been getting colder daily, and the passengers were all putting on warm clothes.

On the 19th we passed Cape Race at 4 A.M. Dense fog and unpleasantly cold. Nothing but experience could have made me believe, on leaving New York, where the heat was more than tropical, that so short a time would produce so great a change. At 11 A.M. the thermometer on deck suddenly fell to 37°, no doubt owing to the proximity of ice. Night very thick.

20th, about 9 A.M., we passed within two miles to the south of a large iceberg. Every one rushed on deck to see it; but the atmosphere was thick and hazy, with cold rain falling, so that it did not appear to advantage. It was very symmetrical, with high peaks or pinnacles, and of a dead white—in which I was disappointed, for I had expected to see it more of a bluish tint; but this might have been owing to the absence of sunshine. It stood high out of the water, with sides perpendicular as a wall. There were numerous caverns and recesses, and a wide split or rent, which apparently would soon open and a large portion become detached. It was a fine sight, and on a sunny day would have been magnificent. We probably passed others during the night, but, owing to the thick fog, they were not seen.

21st. The sea was smooth. I saw a large flock of Shearwaters, *P. major*, and occasionally small trips of them during the day. Hitherto I had only seen a few occasionally, and now and then some Fulmars; but the Stormy Petrels were more abundant than they were on the voyage out, generally following in the wake of the ship.

On the 23rd, when we were about 350 miles from the Irish coast, a pair of Curlews passed the ship, bound to the eastward. When I first noticed them they were at some distance, and I saw them through a glass. They then flew near the ship, as if to reconnoitre, and went rapidly ahead, flying just above the surface of the water.

24th. Soon after 11 A.M. the land was sighted, the Skellig Rock, 700 feet high, a breeding-station of Gannets. It has a very picturesque appearance, rising straight out of the sea, with a pointed and serrated top, and a white line like a road winding round its western side. We passed at some distance. The first land neared was the Bull, the westernmost of three rocks, the others being called the Cow and Calf, on the last of which is a lighthouse. The Bull has a passage entirely through its base like an archway or tunnel, apparently (at the distance we were) amply large enough for a railway train to pass through. The rock itself appears like a large heap of limestone. Numbers of white sea-birds were flying around, most probably Gulls and Gannets; but the distance was too great to determine their species, even with a glass; for although the day was fine and, for these stormy regions, very favourable for observation when near, still the atmosphere was hazy: and I consider myself most fortunate; for one rarely has the chance of seeing this locality at all, and still more rarely in fine weather. The outward-bound steamers always pass in the night; and the chance is but small that those homeward bound pass during daylight and enjoy fine weather as well. And there are probably but few days in the year when a small vessel could reach these sea-bird haunts with any certainty of returning within a reasonable time. From here we passed along the coast past Browhead signal-station, then between Cape Clear and the Fastnet Rock, on which the lighthouse is now placed, to Queenstown, arriving there at 10 P.M. Along the coast I observed numbers of Shearwaters, *Puffinus anglorum*—being much smaller and darker in colour than *P. major*, and with sharper points to the wings. There were also rock-birds and Kittiwakes in abundance, and a few Gannets. Here my observations came to an end, excepting only a few Terns seen off Holyhead the following day when we arrived in the Mersey.

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XXXVI.—*Notes on the Ornithology of Italy and Spain.*

By HOWARD SAUNDERS, F.Z.S.

HAVING passed the last winter and spring in Italy and Spain, I am enabled to offer some further observations upon the ornithology of those countries.